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New restrictions on law-enforcement identifiers now in effect

LANSING – Legislation placing additional safety restrictions on the possession, sale and use of police identifiers went into effect January 1, announced Sen. Michelle McManus, sponsor of the bill.

Senate Bill 444, now Public Act 314 of 2005, expands the list of police identifiers forbidden or restricted for civilian use under Michigan law. These identifiers include the logo, service mark, patch or uniform of a Michigan law enforcement agency.

“With this law on the books, law enforcement officers have one more tool to help protect Michigan citizens from those who would try to take advantage of them by impersonating police or fire personnel,” said McManus, R-Lake Leelanau. “Whether at your front door or milling in the crowd at a major sporting event, police impersonators simply will not be tolerated.”

The new act also strengthens the penalties for those violate the law. Under the measure, the crime is a 93-day misdemeanor instead of 90-days. This means violators would be required to be fingerprinted and their information entered into the Law Enforcement Information Network. LEIN tracks people and keeps a history of their criminal activity.

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